

MASONRY IN MANITOBA

Published by Authority of Grand Lodge

VOL. 5

DECEMBER 1949

No. 10

TO THE INCOMING MASTERS

The dawn of the New Year will bring to you great responsibilities. You have solemnly undertaken the duties attached to your office and until your successor has been installed many decisions still require to be made.

You stand before the brethren of your Lodge as Master—as a Freemason, at the same time you should realize you stand before the world as an apostle of Brotherhood and all that our ancient Craft inculcates in its principles.

We cannot pretend that it is easy to be a Freemason. Nothing that really matters is ever easy. Even a matrimonial union between a man and a woman, whose sole desire is to live in perfect agreement sometimes turns out a failure.

The glorious past of Freemasonry in all parts of the world and the magnitude of the Craft everywhere is liable to lift you to great heights. Sooner or later however you will realize the valley is dusty and the road difficult. On such an occasion you will understand in a very real sense that it is the finer spirit of consecration that gives the strength to overcome the burden of a needy world.

We recommend that in voicing your thoughts and opinions, especially in open lodge, that you avoid using the phrase "I rather think." There is no conviction at this precise point. Bring a spirit of reality to your work and express yourself with an emphatic "I believe." Thus, your members will realize that what you have to say has an attitude of authority and represents a definite conviction.

You must consider Freemasonry as something personal. It is individualistic in all its teaching. Action must come singly and not in mass formation. It is not something exclusively restricted to a given night each month when your lodge is in session. It is continuous. It must ever find expression outside the walls of the Lodge-room.

Freemasonry must have harmony within its own borders because it is a living organism and cannot exist in a hostile environment. It is true that we have necessary restrictions and limitations. This is a proper precaution because it prevents an outburst of enthusiasm on the part of a propagandist.

The only definite plan laid down for your guidance is contained in the Constitution of Grand Lodge, the By-laws of your own lodge and the ceremonial adopted and authorized by Grand Lodge.

Our whole system is one of symmetry and order. Through the years we have been governed by the same fundamental principles.

In your Lodge, then, you will be a unifying force. You will be tolerant in every experience, using your influence and effort to break down racial antipathy, religious differences, class hatred. You will be an exponent of Brotherhood—you will be a Freemason.

CHRISTMAS, 1949

To the thirteen thousand good men and true, whose names are recorded on the Register of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, your editor extends the age-old greeting, "Peace on Earth—Goodwill."

As the traditional season of joy approaches, it is appropriate that we direct our thoughts, to the Christian meaning of this Feast of the Child. Surely, the need has seldom been greater for a re-dedication to the faith implanted in mankind by the Grand Architect of the Universe—a faith from which man has strayed so far.

If we are truly to celebrate Christmas, and partake of the spiritual joy that is inherent in this Season, we must do more than merely exchange greetings and gifts. We must with humility, resolve to become worthy of the greatness of the Child.

Let us, therefore, take to heart the countless mothers in other lands who are shedding bitter tears of pity for children whose eyes bespeak not joy but hunger, for whom the Holiday has ceased to be, and whose young lives have never tasted the sweet fruit of charity, so that we will give them greater help in their present hour of need.

Let us extend tolerance to those whose religious or political creeds differ from ours so that each of us may work out his own destiny in the light of his own convictions and free will.

Let us re-affirm our belief in our country and its priceless heritage, which is firmly grounded upon a strong faith in God, an adherence to democracy with its freedoms from fear and oppression, and the conviction that all men are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights by their Creator.

It is Christmas-time. The old year draws to a close; we are at the threshold of the "New." May the spirit of Christmas—that spirit which impels men everywhere to raise their voices and acclaim "Joy to the world, the Lord is come," motivate, actuate and consecrate you and all your household. May

Your hearth be warm, your heart be light,
Your sky be clear on Christmas night.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Has it ever occurred to you that one of the contributions you can make to the lodge is by simply offering your services to the Master and giving him an assurance that you seek work as well as membership.

It is noticeable that some well-meaning members consider the work of enquiring into the qualifications and character of a petitioner as a bit of drudgery. Oft-times the methods followed are not what we expect and more often than not the subject under enquiry is not interviewed by any member of the committee.

What an opportunity presents itself to the man who wants to practice his Freemasonry.

Suppose you go to your Master and volunteer to act on committees of enquiry for the next six months.

Suppose further that you familiarize yourself with the "do's and don'ts" we have been emphasizing these many months.

Suppose you school yourself in the things a petitioner should know prior to his being accepted and then go forward and meet your applicants fully equipped with the answers to the questions they will probably ask.

The personal contacts created in the pre-initiation period added to the kind of advice, information and instruction you would thus impart will find its reward in the quality of member you finally raise to the sublime degree of Master Mason.

Yes, there is a lot to be done in all our lodges. In some cases the officers don't seem to understand what is required, others complain that workers are scarce, but on the whole it resolves itself to the sad admission that the direction from the top has been lacking.

This is one way in which a brother can make contribution to the Masonic goal and there are many others, equally simple, and all tending to assist the Worshipful Master in making a daily advance in the quest for Brotherhood.

LIBRARY HOURS

The Library is open daily from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m. except on Saturdays when the closing hour is 12 noon.

The Grand Master has appointed R.W. Bro. Geo. A. Woodside as Acting Librarian to complete the term, which will end with the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge in the month of June, 1950.

Brethren are requested to adapt their personal visits to the library in accordance with this time schedule.

LET'S TAKE STOCK

At a British Association meeting held last September the President, Sir Alexander Gray, in his address to the Economics Section, made some interesting comments on the Welfare State. He pointed out the difficulty of maintaining such a State without either incentives to effort or methods of compulsion. Sir Alexander also reaffirmed something that we all need to remember just now when he said: "It is the tritest and most hackneyed of platitudes that rights must forever be accompanied by duties, but though we invariably pay lip service to the well-worn dictum, in fact our eyes in these days are morbidly fixed on our rights, whereas our duties, after a vague and perfunctory wave of the hand in their direction are allowed to fade into the background. A society in which each member concentrates on getting rather than giving has lost the roots of its stability."

And he expressed something which many of us are very conscious of when he concluded: "Before we can be trusted to live in the New Jerusalem, we must first of all be fit to walk the streets of the New Jerusalem. Despite all superficial appearances the new world into which we are moving is not going to be a world which will make everything easy for everybody by giving everybody everything."

A very similar view, although phrased a little differently was that expressed by the erudite author, Harry Williams, in "South London." The writer said; "This may be the age of the common man, but unless the common man raises himself by uncommon exertion he is doomed to extinction!"

In the words of the caption of this item let us all take stock at the end of the year and ascertain what personal inventory will be carried into 1950.

FROM OUR MAIL BAG

One of the Winnipeg brethren writes: "Back Benchers, a most distasteful remark often used in our lodge rooms by the officers.

"I, among many, feel it is discouraging many members from attending meetings. Surely a brother being accepted into Masonry is entitled to be treated with respect and I feel they should be referred to as brethren sitting on the sides.

"On many occasions I have heard the words and always feel like walking out of the lodge. There are many Masons who seldom attend meetings because they resent being referred to as back benchers."

(There is merit in what our brother says. The language of the "Old Charges" contain sound instruction when it tells us to

salute one another in a courteous manner as you will be instructed, calling each other brother.—Ed.)

* * *

Received from a brother in Vicksburg, Miss., a letter asking us when we can spare the space "to define the difference in the York and Scottish Rites." For the present we find plenty to write about concerning Craft Freemasonry and being a Grand Lodge publication we intend to confine our efforts to our own field. Thank you for the compliment.

* * *

It was brought to our attention that a Lodge had mislaid its Historical Register. As a matter of fact the book has been missing for twelve years. Our first reaction was "why did all the District Deputy Grand Masters, in office over the period, not discover this when they examined the books as they are expected to do at the time of their official visit. Let us hope this is an isolated case.

* * *

A member of a Winnipeg lodge now residing in Edmonton, Alberta, writes: "I cherish the monthly notice with 'Masonry in Manitoba' enclosed. The recent edition of which was thoroughly enjoyed. I liked the moral of the 'Short, Short Story.' 'Never underestimate the influence of Masonry in your life, nor your personal influence upon the men you associate with behind our tiled doors.'

"It was the personal influence of men of goodwill who were Masons, with whom I had associated, *not behind our tiled doors*, which prompted me over a period of years to finally make my personal request for the honour of being allowed to become a member of the Order.

"The personal influence upon men, of Masons, must extend to all, regardless of whether we meet them behind closed doors or not."

(This came from a member whose experience indicates that we are making Masons as well as members in Manitoba.)

* * *

We received the sad news advising the sudden death of R.W. Brother Walter B. Congdon, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Minnesota, at Yakima, Wash., on 20th October. Our late brother has been a welcome visitor to our annual communications since 1942 and his many friends in this jurisdiction will read this item with sorrow. Personally we have lost a faithful friend and the Craft a devoted student of the Royal Art.

Another interesting memo reached us from Holland. This concerns a real family meeting in Holland Lodge No. 63 held on 12th October. The Worshipful Master called it "Sundell Night." Let us glance at the names of the brethren who occupied the chairs and conferred the Master Mason Degree.

Clarence Sundell	W.M.	(Son)
Alexander Sundell	S.W.	(Father)
Harvey Sundell	J.W.	(Son)
Leslie Sundell	S.D.	(Son)
Gus Sundell	J.D.	(Brother)
Eric Sundell	I.G.	(Brother)
Tom Sundell	S.S.	(Son)
Joe Scott	J.S.	(Brother-in-law)

At the conclusion of the meeting the brethren, in attendance were guests of W.Bro. Alex. Sundell at the Memorial Hall, where lunch was served by the "several" better halves of the "various" Sundells.

* * *

We notice from the columns of the daily papers that Elkhorn Lodge No. 74 celebrated its fiftieth anniversary on 3rd November.

To the brethren of Elkhorn we extend birthday congratulations. May this celebration inspire and encourage them to greater achievement in the years that lie ahead.

Why is it that lodge officers fail to recognize the fact that a Jubilee celebration is an auspicious event not only in the annals of local life but in the wider sphere of Grand Lodge? We are disappointed that somebody neglected to send an item for our pages. We make this comment because the first intimation of the celebration to reach us was the brief paragraph in the press.